

Claims

1. A method for effectuating a succeeding registration of a domain name for an interested entity following the expiration of a prior registration of the domain name, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving from an interested entity a request identifying a domain name having a registered status; and

automatically:

determining an expiration date for the status;

defining a time period for checking the status based on the expiration date;

periodically checking the status at a predefined frequency within the time period; and

when the status indicates that the domain name is registrable, requesting registration of the domain name for the interested entity.

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

automatically:

predicting an earliest moment of registrability for the domain name based on the expiration date; and

increasing the frequency of said checking, proximate to the predicted earliest moment of registrability.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein said checking includes pinging a registrar.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein said checking includes substantially contemporaneous pinging of multiple registrars.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein said checking includes pinging a registry.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein said checking includes receiving a communication pushed from a registrar.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein said checking includes receiving a communication pushed from a registry.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein:

the interested entity is a registrant of the domain name; and

said requesting registration requests a renewal of the registered status of the domain name for the registrant.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein said requesting registration of the domain name requests registration to an escrow entity; and further comprising the step of transferring the domain name from the escrow entity to the interested entity.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein said requesting registration includes multiple substantially contemporaneous requests.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein the multiple substantially contemporaneous requests are sent to multiple registrars.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein the request identifying the domain name is received through the Internet via a Web page form.

13. A method for effectuating an automatic renewal of a registration for a domain name on behalf of a registrant, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving from a registrant a request to automatically renew a registration for a domain name, the request being received before the registration expires;

determining an expiration date for the registration;

periodically checking the registration at a predefined frequency proximate to the expiration date; and

responsive to the registration expiring, renewing the registration for the registrant.

14. The method of claim 13 further comprising the step of, responsive to the domain name becoming registrable, re-registering the domain name for the registrant.

15. A method for domain name management comprising the steps of:

receiving from an interested entity a request to monitor a domain name registration maintained by a registry;

monitoring a request between a registrar and the registry to detect an event affecting the domain name registration;

identifying the event as belonging to a specific type; and

based on the specific type of event, taking a predefined action.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein the event is a WHOIS event.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein:

the specific type of event is a change to a WHOIS record for the domain name registration; and

the predefined action is notifying the interested entity of the change.

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18. The method of claim 17 wherein the WHOIS record is maintained by the registry.

19. The method of claim 17 wherein the WHOIS record is maintained by the registrar.

20. The method of claim 17 further comprising the step of recording the changed WHOIS record as a base reference for the domain name registration.

21. The method of claim 15 wherein the event is a RRP event.

22. The method of claim 21 wherein:

the specific type of event is an add request; and

the predefined action is notifying the interested entity of the add request.

23. The method of claim 21 wherein:

the specific type of event is a renewal request; and

the predefined action is notifying the interested entity of the renewal event.

24. The method of claim 21 wherein:

the specific type of event is a transfer request; and

the predefined action is notifying the interested entity of the transfer request.

25. The method of claim 21 wherein:

the specific type of event is a delete request; and

the predefined action is notifying the interested entity of the delete request.

26. The method of claim 21 wherein:

the specific type of event is a delete request; and

the predefined action is requesting a next registration to succeed the domain name registration subject to the delete request.

27. The method of claim 26 wherein the next registration is for the interested entity.

28. The method of claim 26 wherein the next registration is for an escrow agent, and further comprising the steps of:

identifying a second interested entity;

auctioning the next registration between the first interested entity and the second interested entity.

29. The method of claim 28 further comprising the step of transferring the next registration from the escrow agent to a winner of the auctioning step.

30. The method of claim 15 wherein:
- the domain name registration is for a domain name;
- the specific type of event is an expiration of the registration period for the domain name; and
- the predefined action is an automated registration of the domain name for the interested entity.
31. The method of claim 30 wherein the interested entity is a registrant.
32. The method of claim 31 wherein the interested entity is a third party.
33. A method for domain name management comprising:
- a step for identifying a domain name with a first registration;
- a step for identifying an interested party desiring a succeeding registration for the domain name;
- a step for monitoring a status of the first registration; and
- a step for effecting the succeeding registration when the status of the first registration indicates that the domain name is registrable.
34. A method for initiating an auction, driven by demand-side interest for a domain name, the method comprising the steps of:
- identifying at least one entity indicating interest in a domain name;
- comparing the indicated interest of the at least one entity to a predetermined threshold interest; and
- if the indicated interest at least equals the predetermined threshold interest, informing a registrant of the domain name of an auction potential represented by the at least one entity.
35. The method of claim 34 further comprising the step of conducting an auction among the at least one entity.
36. The method of claim 35 wherein the auction is in-person.
37. The method of claim 35 wherein the auction is conducted via a Web site.
38. The method of claim 34 wherein:
- the indicated interest is quantified as a number entities in the at least one entity; and
- the threshold interest is quantified as a desired minimum number of the entities in the at least one entity.

39. The method of claim 34 wherein:

the indicated interest is quantified by a monetary value ascribed to the domain name by the at least one entity; and
the threshold interest is quantified as a desired minimum monetary value ascribed to the domain name by the registrant.

40. The method of claim 34 wherein the step of identifying the at least one entity includes receiving from each of the at least one entity a request to monitor a registration for the domain name.

41. The method of claim 34 wherein the step of identifying the at least one entity includes receiving from each of the at least one entity a request to register the domain name once a current registration for the domain name expires.

42. The method of claim 35 wherein the step of identifying the at least one entity includes receiving from each of the at least one entity a request to facilitate an auction for the domain name.

43. A method for auctioning a succeeding registration of a domain name that has a current registration, the method comprising the steps of:

identifying at least one entity desiring a succeeding registration of a domain name after a current registration of the domain name expires;

registering a succeeding registration of the domain name to an escrow agent after the current registration expires;

holding an auction among the at least one entity to determine a winning entity;
and

transferring the succeeding registration from the escrow agent to the winning entity.

44. A method for effecting a subsequent registration of an identification resource used to identify a node on a distributed network, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving an indication of an identification resource from an interested entity;
repeatedly checking the status of the identification resource; and
responsive to the status of the identification resource indicating that the identification resource is registrable, registering the identification resource for the interested entity.

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45. The method of claim 44 wherein the identification resource is a domain name.

46. A system for domain name management and acquisition operating within a domain name registration system wherein a registry administers allocation of a domain name, a registrar issues a request to the registry for a registration of the domain name for an interested entity, the request being communicated through a secure communication channel between the registrar and the registry, and registration information is stored in a public registrar database maintained by the registrar and a public registry database maintained by the registry, the registration information including an expiration date for the registration, the system for domain name management and acquisition comprising:

a front end for receiving an indication of the domain name from the interested entity;

a processing and distribution engine to receive the indication of the domain name from the front end, determine the expiration date by querying the public registrar database and the public registry database, and instruct the acquisition array to communicate with the registry proximate to the expiration date to register the domain name for the interested entity; and

an acquisition array integrated with the registrar so as to communicate with the registry via the secure communication channel.

47. The system of claim 46 wherein:

the public registry database is a registry WHOIS database; and

the public registrar database is a registrar WHOIS database.

48. The system of claim 46 further comprising an acquisition routine employed by the acquisition array: (a) to query the registry repeatedly at a predefined frequency to determine a registrability status of the domain name; and (b) to issue a command to the registry to register the domain name if the registrability status indicates the domain name is registrable.

49. The system of claim 46 wherein the front end is a Web server, and further comprising a Web page hosted by the Web server, the Web page presenting a graphical user interface to receive the indication of the domain name from the interested entity.

50. The system of claim 46 wherein the front end is an e-mail server.

51. The system of claim 46 wherein the front end is a telephone call center.

52. The system of claim 46 wherein the acquisition array is an array of computers.

53. The system of claim 46 wherein the acquisition array is a computer with multiple communication ports.

54. A system for domain name management comprising:

(a) a domain name registry for administering the allocation of a plurality of domain names within a specific domain;

(b) a registrar to communicate with the registry and change registration information for the plurality of domain names, the registration information being maintained by the registrar and the registry;

(c) a third-party agent representing an interested entity, the third-party agent coupled to the registrar and registry for ongoing monitoring of the registration information maintained by the registrar and the registry; and including means for:

 taking a predetermined action as soon as practicable after a predetermined event reflected by a change in the monitored registration information.

55. The system of claim 54 wherein:

 the predetermined event is an expiration of a registration for a specific domain name; and

 the predetermined action is registering the specific domain name for the interested entity.

56. The system of claim 54 wherein:

 the predetermined event is a change to the domain name registration information for a specific domain name; and

 the predetermined action is notifying the interested entity of the change.

57. A system for domain name management comprising:

(a) a domain name registry for administering the allocation of a plurality of domain names within a specific domain;

(b) a registrar to communicate with the registry and change registration information for the plurality of domain names, the registration information being maintained by the registrar and the registry;

(c) a third-party agent representing an interested entity, the third-party agent monitoring a communication between the registrar and the registry to make a change to the

registration information; and including means for taking a predetermined action as soon as practicable after a predetermined event reflected by the change to the registration information.

58. The system of claim 57 wherein:

the predetermined event is a deletion of a registration for a specific domain name; and

the predetermined action is registering the specific domain name for the interested entity.

59. The system of claim 57 wherein the predetermined action is notifying the interested entity of the change to the registration information.

60. The system of claim 57 wherein the registrar notifies the third-party agent of the communication between the registrar and the registry.

61. The system of claim 57 wherein the registry notifies the third-party agent of the communication between the registrar and the registry.

62. A domain name registration system comprising:

(a) input means for receiving an indication of a domain name; and

(b) an acquisition engine coupled to the input means and integrated with a domain name registrar having access to a domain name registry so as to enable the acquisition engine to determine a status of the indicated domain name.

63. The system of claim 60 wherein the acquisition engine further includes an acquisition routine to register the indicated domain name if the status indicates that the indicated domain name is registrable.

64. A computerized system for facilitating an auction of a domain name, the system comprising:

a demand database for storing a representation of demand for a domain name;

a network front end for receiving from each of at least one interested entity, via a network, a corresponding indication of demand for the domain name and recording each of the at least one interested entity and the corresponding indication of demand in the demand database as the representation of demand for the domain name;

means for comparing the representation of demand in the demand database to a predetermined threshold demand, and, in response to a favorable comparison,

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communicating to a registrant of the domain name a proposal for an auction of the domain name among the at least one interested entity.

65. The system of claim 64 wherein:
 - the network is the Internet; and
 - the front end is a Web server hosting a Web page with a form for receiving the indication of demand.
66. The system of claim 64 wherein the means is a computer-executable auction procedure.
67. The system of claim 64 wherein the representation of demand quantifies the number of the at least one interested entity.
68. The system of claim 64 wherein the representation of demand aggregates a monetary value ascribed to the domain name by each of the at least one interested entity.